

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ADDIS 02229 281031Z

11

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 SCS-03 CIAE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 SAM-01 MC-02 ACDA-19 IO-14 CU-04

SCCT-02 AID-20 CCO-00 FBO-01 NIC-01 OC-06 OPR-02

USSS-00 SCA-01 A-01 OMB-01 SY-10 NEA-10 OS-03 DRC-01

/183 W

----- 065162

O R 280906Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7804

INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

USCINCEUR IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 2229

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PGOV

SUBJ: ETHIOPIA AT THE CROSSROADS

REF: ADDIS 2210

1. AS WE CONTEMPLATE THE NATIONAL POLITICAL SECENE FOLLOWING THE RESIGNATION OF THE AKILU GOVERNMENT, WE ARE STRUCK BY THE APPARENT DISARRAY AT THE APEX OF NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS OF GOVERNMENT.

2. THE EMPEROR, OF COURSE, REMAINS (ALTHOUGH THE ABSENCE OF THE CROWN PRINCE AND THE OPEN QUESTION OF HIS CAPACITIES EVIDENTLY PLACE A PARTICULAR PREMIUM UPON THE MONARCH'S CONTINUING PHYSICAL AND MENTAL VIABILITY AT PRESENT), AND WE HAVE NO RPT NO INDICATION THAT THE OVERWHELMING MAS OF THE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 ADDIS 02229 281031Z

PEOPLE, MUCH OF THE ELITE AS WELL AS THE DISSIDENTS THEMSELVES,

WISH TO ABANDON THE MONARCHICAL INSTITUTION AND "THE SYMBOLS OF THE EMPIRE." WE JUDGE THAT THE PERSON OF THE EIGHTY-ONE-YEAR OLD EMPEROR CONTINUES TO ENJOY WIDERSPEAD RESPECT, NOTWITH-

STANDING THE CRITISISMS VOICED ABOUT HIM FROM TIME TO TIME, OF WHICH THE DEPARTMENT IS AWARE.

3. THE AUTHORITY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PRIME MINISTER AND OF THE CABINET, HAVING BEEN NOTABLE FOR THEIR ABSENCE THROUGHOUT THE CRISIS WHICH, IN RETROSPECT, MAY BE SAID TO HAVE ENTERED ITS ACTIVE PHASE WITH THE NEGELLE MUTINY, HAVE NOW TERMINATED IN THE FALL OF THE GOVERNMENT. THIS LEAVES AVOID WHICH OTHER MEN OR INSTITUTIONS WILL HAVE TO FILL. THE ARMED FORCES ARE, AT THIS WRITING, A WEAK REED FOR THE EMPEROR TO LEAN UPON. MOREOVER, NEITHER THE DISSIDENTS NOR THE REST ARE YET ORGANIZATIONALLY UNIFIED, A FACT WHICH, IN CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES, MAY YET FURTHER COMPLICATE THE PROBLEM. THEIR LEADERSHIP HAS ALSO FAILED AT THE NATIONAL COMMAND LEVEL. THE CROWN COUNCIL IS HEADED BY A MAN WITH HIS OWN POTENTIAL CLAIM TO THE THRONE. RAS ASRATE KASSA, MOREOVER, IS WIDELY VIEWED AS A CONSERVATIVE OF THE OLD SCHOOL AND, IN THAT SENSE, REPRESENTS THE CONTINUATION OF A LEADERSHIP WHICH THE YOUNG MODERNITSTS HAVE LONG WISHED TO ALTER. PARLIAMENT IS A STILL NASCENT INSTITUTION. THE EDUCATIONAL MEDIAM OF ITS MEMBERS IS LESS THAN 8TH GRADE.

4. FORTUNATELY, IN A SENSE, MOST ETHIOPIANS ARE RULED NOT BY GOVERNMENT BUT BY RELIGION, FAMILY, TRIBAL OBLIGATIONS AND TRADITION. PROVIDING THE NATIONAL CENTER REMAINS VIABLE AND NOTHING EXACERBRATE ALWAYS LATENT PROVINCIAL AND REGIONAL CENTRIFUGAL FORCES, THE COUNTRYSIDE MAY WELL CONTINUE LITTLE AFFECTED BY THE VOID WHICH HAS NOW OPENED BETWEEN THE MONARCH AND THE ADIMINISTRATIVE LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT.

5. HOWEVER, THIS VACUUM OF LEADERSHIP CANNOT LONG REMAIN. IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHETHER THE EMPEROR'S YEARS HAVE LEFT HIS SENSE OF TIMING AND HIS POLITICAL ACUITY UP TO THE TASK WHICH NOW CONFRONTS HIM. FOR, IF HE DOES NOT OR CANNOT MOVE TO PUT IN PLACE NEW MEN OF TRUST AND LOYALTY WHO MAY ENJOY SUFFICIENT SUPPORT IN KEY QUARTERS, HE RISKS ATTEMPTS BY THOSE

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 ADDIS 02229 281031Z

WHO, IN THE LIGHT OF RECENT EVENTS, ARE FEELING ENCOURAGED TO HASTEN THE MODERNIZATION AND REDEFINE THE GOVERNANCE OF THE ETHIOPIAN STATE, TO PLACE THEIR OWN AT THE MODERN LEVERS OF POWER.

6. IN SHORT, THE CURTAIN IS ABOUT TO RISE ON THE POLITICAL PHASE OF THE CRISIS, AND WE MUST SEEK IN THE DAYS TO COME TO DISCERN THE PLAYERS AND THE POLICIEES THAT MAY BE ABOUT TO MAKE

THEIR ENTRANCE UPON THE ETHIOPIAN STAGE.

7. IT IS TOO EARLY TO ASSESS THE IMPLICATIONS FOR THE US OF THE EVENTS NOW IN COURSE HERE. OUR PRIMARY TASK IN THE DAYS AHEAD MUST OBVIOUSLY BE TO ENHANCE THE SECURITY OF ETHIOPIA'S AMERICAN RESIDENTS, THEIR PROPERTY AND INTERESTS TO THE DEGREE POSSIBLE. WE SHALL ALSO HAVE TO MEASURE OUR ACTIONS SO AS TO STRIKE AN APPROPRIATE BALANCE BETWEEN THE REQUIREMENTS OF ESSENTIAL CONTINUING TRANSACTIONS WITH THE ETHIOPIAN ADMINISTRATION AND THE NEED TO AVOID (TO THE DEGREE POSSIBLE) ANY MISREADING OF OUR POSTURE AS UNDUE INTERFERENCE IN ETHIOPIA'S DOMESTIC POLITICAL AFFAIRS.
WYMAN

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: GOVERNMENT REFORM, POLITICAL MILITARY RELATIONS, GOVERNMENT OVERTHROW, MONARCHY, POLITICAL CONCESSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 FEB 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974ADDIS02229
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: ADDIS ABABA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t1974024/aaaaaddz.tel
Line Count: 128
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: ADDIS 2210
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 AUG 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <27 AUG 2002 by shawdg>; APPROVED <10 DEC 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ETHIOPIA AT THE CROSSROADS
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, (SELASSIE, HAILE)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005